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try so getting possession of Egypt will in my opinion be possessed of the master key to all the commerce of the world" (p. 318).

From the selections that have been published thus far it is manifest that Lord Spencer's papers are of almost equal importance for students of history with those of Pitt, Grenville, and other members of the British cabinet in that troublous time. It is regrettable, therefore, that those documents which would be of the greatest general interest are, in the language of the editor, "unfortunately too voluminous and too political" for publication in this series.

WILLIAM THOMAS LAPRADE.

*A History of the Peninsular War.* By CHARLES OMAN, M.A., Hon. LL.D., Chichele Professor of Modern History, Oxford University. Volume V. October, 1811–August 31, 1812. *Valencia; Ciudad Rodrigo; Badajoz; Salamanca; Madrid.* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press. 1914. Pp. xiv, 634.)

AFTER the extended reviews of the earlier volumes of this work in this journal (VIII. 569; IX. 380; XIV. 131; XVII. 830), it might seem unnecessary to say more than that the present volume maintains the high standard set by its predecessors; but it does more, its incidents are of greater significance and interest; Professor Oman's handling of the complex problems is more masterly; and the narrative is rendered with more spirit and literary feeling than heretofore.

The first ninety pages tell the story of Suchet's campaign from the middle of September, 1811, to March, 1812, with the battle of Saguntum and the capture of Valencia. More than forty pages follow on the inconsequential siege of Tarifa and the minor campaigning. These pages are highly necessary to depict the background of Wellington's first great offensive, the siege of Ciudad Rodrigo. The diversion of troops from Marmont to Suchet in Valencia, and the achievements of the guerrilla leaders like Mina (pp. 102–104) so kept down the numbers available for the French Army of Portugal that Wellington, after two years and a half of campaigning, felt warranted in taking the initiative.

The sieges of Ciudad Rodrigo and of Badajoz with the consequent operations fill 140 pages; 200 pages more go to the campaign of Salamanca and the occupation of Madrid, with fifty additional pages on the synchronous lesser campaigns which kept more than half the French in the Peninsula distracted from the decisive operations. These major operations are described by Professor Oman with a fullness, accuracy, clearness, and realism that place his narrative ahead of Napier's. Napier's artificial literary luridity on the storm of Badajoz cannot compare for impressive effect with the simple but vivid realism of Oman's account. Napier glided over the disgrace of the sack in a brief paragraph; Oman hides none of its horror, and does not extenuate the crime though he presents clearly the military and ethical considerations

involved. In the description of Salamanca Oman has completely surpassed Napier.

Though Professor Oman writes primarily as a military historian, his treatment of the political situation is thorough and masterly. The chapters on Politics at Cadiz and Elsewhere (pp. 136-156) and on King Joseph as commander-in-chief (pp. 297-314) are illuminating. The effects of the emperor's efforts to manage the Spanish affair from Paris, of his drawing troops from Spain for the Russian campaign, and of his absence on that campaign are shown clearly and fairly, and are kept constantly in mind. Though Wellington is Oman's hero, the appraisal of his merits and faults seems done with even-handed justice. The judgments upon Suchet, Soult, and Marmont, though strict, are fairer than Napier's, which indulge Soult at the expense of Marmont. Oman is more severe with Napoleon than Napier, but makes his reasons clear and convincing. Compare Oman's "Napoleon was directly and personally responsible for the fall of Badajoz" (p. 214), with Napier's "The fall of Badajoz may therefore be traced partly to the Russian war. . . ." (book 16, chapter 7). Oman's correlation of events is masterly; only once are his phrases careless of precise synchronism, when he anticipates the Russian campaign by two months (p. 352). Such references to Napier as appear on pages 215 and 216 are unpardonable and should not be allowed to mar a future volume or a new edition, even granted that they are true.

New information has enabled Oman to correct and to supplement Napier at many points on matters of fact. The most notable materials which he has been the first to use are, as in the previous volume, the D'Urban and the Scovell papers. The peculiar interest of the Scovell ciphers is shown in Appendix 15, and the same papers furnish some hitherto unpublished despatches of the highest importance (pp. 370, 374, 394). The extensive appendixes contain a wealth of data of numbers engaged and of losses. There are fourteen excellent maps and plans, but every reader must frequently wish that a good map of the whole peninsula were available in each volume. The proof-reading has been so remarkably accurate that two or three errors are surprising. *Ariège* (p. 99), *Trelliard* (p. 134, etc.), and *Dembowski* (p. 131 etc.) are the correct forms. The note on page 605 referring to the death of *Dembowski* is inaccurate.

The note dated August 5, 1914, added to the preface shows that the volume was completed before the declaration of war, but the reader who has alternated its pages with those of the daily paper has found interest and instruction beyond what the author could have anticipated.

GEORGE MATTHEW DUTCHER.